

The Potter Journal

Devoted to the Principles of True Democracy, and the Dissemination of Morality, Literature and News.

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Devoted to the cause of Republicanism, the interests of Agriculture, the advancement of Education, and the best good of Potter County. Owing to the great extent of the Principle, it will endeavor to aid in the work of more fully freemaking our Country.

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DEALERS IN DRUGS, MEDICINES, PAINTS, Oils, Fancy Articles, Stationery, Dry Goods, Groceries, &c., Main st., Coudersport, Pa.

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GLAUDERS HOTEL,
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A Livery Stable is also kept in connection with this Hotel.

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References.—Hon. ISAAC BENSON, Hon. A. G. OLMSTED, J. S. MANN, Esq., F. W. KNOX, Esq., DAN BAKER, Claim Agent Coudersport Pa.

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THE STRANGER ON THE BELL.

Between broad fields of wheat and corn in the lovely home where I was born, the peach tree leans against the wall, and the wooden vineyard over all. There is the shaded doorway still—But a stranger's foot has crossed the sill. There is the barn—land, as of yore, I can smell the hay from the open door, and hear the peevish snort of the cow. But the stranger comes, oh! painful proof, his shadow is cast on the barn door. There is the orchard—aha, very trees, that knew my childhood so well to please, where I watched the shadow moments run, till my life imbued more of shade than sun. The swing from the bough still sweeps the air, but the stranger's children are swinging there. It bubbles, the shady spring below, with its burrish brook where the hazel grows. 'Twas there I found the calamity root, and watched the minnows poise and shoot, and heard the robin lave his wing—But the stranger's bucket is at the spring. Oh, ye who daily cross the sill, Step lightly, for I love it still; And when ye crowd the old barn eaves, Then think what countless harvest sheaves Have passed within that scented door, To gladden eyes that are no more.

Deal kindly with these orchard trees, And when your children crowd your knees, Their sweetest fruit they shall impart, As if old memories stirred their heart; To youthful sport still leave the swing, And in sweet reverence hold the ring.

LITTLE STARLIGHT.

It was soon after the first of those terrible Wilderness battles of last spring that Little Starlight made his first appearance among us. Now here you say, who Little Starlight was? Very probably, from his romantic name, you picture him to yourself as a pretty boy—a beau ideal Young America, with clustering curls, and the relevant blooming precocity of face and form: Nothing of the kind. Our Little Starlight was a negro urchin, extremely small for his age—which might have been fifteen could we have had a date to reckon from—and as black as the ace of spades, when the ace of spades is excessively black and shiny.

When he came from, who he belonged to, how he came among us, we never exactly knew. He was a sort of masculine Topsy, and probably merely "grov'd" somewhere in the vicinity of our bivouac. On the morning after the battle he had been found in our lines, strutting about the camp in a very conceited way, with a quick observing eye for everything he saw. His appearance was comical in the extreme. Upon his ebony head, and entirely concealing his crisp wool, was jauntily placed a span new artillery cap, which he had probably picked up from the field. He had fastened to the right shoulder of his ragged coat—a swallow tailed blue of unknown antiquity—an immense epaulette, probably plundered from the baggage of some rebel officer; while a silken sash of flaming crimson was twined round his waist in a manner at once striking and barbaric, with a long end that trailed behind like the giddy tail of some variegated tropic bird. His trousers—we will skip them; let it suffice to say that they were unmentionables to the last degree.

No one could tell how the little fellow got into the camp, and he wouldn't tell himself. The pickets and sentries were prodigiously that he had not passed them; so we were compelled to let the mystery of his appearance remain unsolved. It was shortly after sunrise when the corporal of the guard brought him before me, with—
"Here's a prisoner, or contraband, or something of the kind, chaplain. I just picked him up, and don't know what to do with him."

I almost exploded with laughter at seeing the individual in question, but immediately set down on a stump and proceeded to investigate. Captain Allen came along at the same time, and presently the Major also dropped in. So we formed ourselves into an informal court martial around the object of our attention, with the view of having some amusement for the hungry half hour that would elapse before breakfast. The "brass" of the lad was surprised; for he never changed countenance during the whole of this ceremony, which we made as imposing as we could by word and look. All eyes were turned on me expectantly, as I opened the proceedings.

"What is your name, my boy?"
"Dunno, mass'r. 'Spect I isn't got none." This was the reply, accompanied by a sparkling grin of extraordinary breadth, as though this unobnoxious condition was a matter of much self satisfaction.

"Oh, you must have some name," I said. "What did they call you at home?"
"I allers came without callin'. But web I shinned along kinder slow, sometimes day'd sing out, 'Nig!' sometimes 'Little Nig!' an' den sign, 'Hyar, you d—'

Nig! I'll bet dey did, mass'r!

Yah! yah! Ise a awful cuss, I is!" he continued, twinging his arms gleefully about and shuffling his bare feet as if contemplating a breakdown.
"Silence!" roared the Major, who acted as presiding officer, at the same time knitting his brows furiously to conceal the laughter which almost choked him.
"Silence, de! I'll commit you for contempt!"

Somehow started by the vehemence of this injunction the little fellow remained silent, and taking off his cap, commenced stroking his mop of a head in a serious manner, which was more comical than his mirth. "Well, my friend," I resumed, "where do you come from?"
"Nolhar ob late, mass'r. I'se been sleepin' out feren'ly. Yer see I'se a awful cuss, dis. Yah! yah! I'se—"

"Silence!" exclaimed the judge.
"Sartin, sartin, mass'r." Yah! yah!
"Who do you belong to?" I resumed.
"Yah! yah! I ain't got none. Yer see he's gwine away, he is!"
"But what was your master's name?"
"Cannel Billy."

"Billy what?"
"Dunno. Yer see dis chicken wore left behin' wid ole missus an' de gals, wife Mass'r Billy gwine to de war way up to Richmond." An' yer see, de ole missus she dun gib dis nig a lickin', so I jis slips out in de night time, climbs into de barn, steals all de pigeons, an' clars de track for Ole Virginny. Yah! yah! I'se a awful cuss, I is!"

"Pigeons?—What did you do with the pigeons?" I asked, my curiosity carrying me away from the subject in hand.
"Libs on 'em to be shore, mass'r!—Dey's so bully fodder, nice an' dan de hard tack!" Yah! yah! I'se got jis one left."

And sure enough, as he spoke, he drew from one of the capacious pockets of his tattered coat a sorry looking pigeon, still alive, which, before we could guess his intention, he proceeded to put to death in a very summary manner. Nipping the head of the bird between his finger and thumb, he twisted the body around in the air till it fell to the ground, completely twisted from the head, which remained in his hand.

"What are you doing that for?" I exclaimed, somewhat horrified at what I saw, as were the rest of the Court.
The little fellow threw away the pigeon's head without answering, picked up the body, and laid it at my feet with a "Yah! yah!" from which I judged that it was meant as a present for my breakfast.

"Well, what is the decision of the Court?" said I, laughing and turning to the Major.
"I really do not know," was the reply. Ask the monkey if he will fight, and which side he favors."
I put the question.

"De Union all de time, shore!" was the enthusiastic reply.
"What can you do?" I asked.
The little fellow cast a comprehensive glance around him in every direction, as if he could do any and every thing under the sun, and was merely puzzled upon which to try his hand for a outset.

At length his eye caught sight of a kettle-drum which was taking an airing a short distance off, and with a gush of delight he ran toward it. Quick as the trap was over his shoulder, the sticks were in his hand, and throwing his head back with a gesture of pride, he rolled off the reveille with the flourish and accuracy of a master.

"Bravo!" cried Captain Allen—"You're the man we want. Why not have him drum for our company?" he added, turning to me. "Johnny went into the hospital day before yesterday, and we have had but little music since."
"An excellent idea," said I.

The Major also agreed; and Starlight, to his infinite satisfaction, was forthwith installed as second drummer boy, Company C, 4th New York Infantry.

His name—by which he was altogether known among us—originated, at the suggestion of one of the officers, in the wonderful story aspect of the heavens on the night preceding the early morning of his capture.

He was a favorite in the company, and a standing joke with the regiment, in a single day. No one could surpass him on the drum, and he never complained of too much work. We made him wash himself thoroughly in the river, and then presented him with a genuine uniform, of which he appeared as proud as a young peacock of her sprouting tail.

Little Starlight was not one of us long, but if I should undertake to describe one half of his whimsical characteristics, "the sun would go down on the unfinished tale."

He never got out of humor, was never excessively hungry, and his slender frame was so iron moulded. He endured, without a murmur, any marks of fatigue, marches which tried to the utmost, and stalwart frames of hardened veterans, and would, after the march, execute with gusto a dozen breakdowns, Jim Crows, and Bob Billeys, for the diversion of the weary regiment. I never saw him flinch when under fire, and I have seen him under the hottest. He had a penchant for obtaining trophies on the field of battle; and carried so many knives and pistols upon his person that he was quite a walking arsenal. More than once he was seen to use his fire-arms, and if at long range, it was, nevertheless, with the best of intentions.

It is true he had his foibles, and grave ones. He was a natural born thief, and my most impressive sermonizing totally failed to convince him of the gravity of his fault. He seemed to consider himself naturally depraved, and was therefore philosophically complacent with his sin, meeting my admonitions with his usual "I'se a awful cuss, mass'r, I is."

To my heart, search as I would, I could find less of blame than pity for him when I thought of the criminal neglect which must have attended his bringing up, with that of the rest of his wronged and unfortunate race. Besides, the material effects of his thieving were not considerable. There was not much to steal in the first place, and when any one did miss any thing worth retaining, a tight clutch upon Starlight's windpipe had a few preposterous threats would generally cause him to "shell out" the missing article, if it was really in his possession. And it seemed generally conceded that his virtues more than counterbalanced his foibles. For his hand was as ready to support a wounded man to an ambulance as it was to rifle the pockets of a fallen foe.

There was one thing alone which almost redeemed him in my eyes; and that was his passionate desire for freedom—his enthusiastic devotion to the cause under whose banner he served.

My duties as chaplain were in and demand in those bloody battle days, when ministrations to the dying and prayers for the dead were so frequently required; but I found some time, nevertheless, to devote to Starlight. The little heathen always listened with the profoundest gravity to every thing I said, but with a perceptible stolidity which often discouraged me, except when I spoke of the future of his race, of their prospects for freedom and improvement. His eyes would light up at this, his expressive features would fairly glow with enthusiasm.

"Yes, mass'r," he one day exclaimed, "I feels it in my bones. It'll come round one day or 'nother. I knows I'll be free!"
"You are so already," said I. "The President's Proclamation has made you so. You have nothing to fear."
"Jis so, mass'r," he replied. "De President he am a nice man, he am. But I doesn't feel it in de bones yit, I nebber will till I git on to him, yer know. Jis lemme git on to him—only once!"
"On to whom?" I asked.

"On to de Ole Man—Cannel Billy—Jis lemme git on to him, den I'll be free!"
"You surely would not kill your old master?"
"Wouldn't I? Yah! yah!" And thereat Starlight began to fumble among the various knives and pistols which adorned his person in a manner that was anything but conciliatory. "Trus' dis looker in ebery fight. I seed him lick my ole mudder till de blood flew. Jis lemme on to him, mass'r, and you'll see de blood fly yours'r." Yah! yah! I'se a awful cuss, I is."

Upon a brief acquaintance with Starlight I should have smiled at the serio comic manner in which these sentiments were enunciated; but as it was, I shuddered at the intensity of passion which lurked in his tones.

And through all those terrible battles, and rapid marches and counter-marches, with which General Grant terrified and confused the rebel foe, from the Rapidan to the walls of Richmond, Little Starlight conducted himself with credit, winning golden opinions from all, and upon one occasion, a hearty hand shake from the General of our division.

It was, however, at the severe skirmish on our left, immediately following our general repulse from the rebel works, and shortly before the transfer of our army to the south bank of the James, that the part which Starlight played in the great drama was to assume a truly tragic phase. The enemy's skirmishers and ours were hotly engaged, and the fight had fair to be bloody, if brief. I was immediately in the rear of a portion of our regiment, which was in reserve, busy with the wounded; and Starlight was hopping about me, doing what he could to assist, but now and then looking up, and throwing curious glances toward the fight, which was not distant.

Suddenly an exclamation from him caused me to turn, when I saw him gazing intently, with his hand pointing toward the ground where the skirmish was progressing.

"Roory! boory! Dere he is! Dere he is!" he shouted.
He succeeded in directing my attention to a fine looking rebel officer, who was cheering on his men in a charge they were making upon our position.

"Dat's him! dat's him!" cried Starlight, at the same time freeing himself from his drum and casting it on one side, while his voice was wild and strange, with a fierce joy.

And before I could arrest him, or exactly understand his intention, he snatched a musket, and bayonet from the ground, and ran like a deer after our column, which was advancing to repel the threatened assault.

From my position I could see the whole affair. The smoke of the musketry fire was thick, but a western gale was blowing, and the opposing columns were pretty plainly discernible. Then the firing ceased, and I saw them meet in the shock of steel to steel. The ranks of the rebels were broken, and they scattered back toward their abatis and the thick woods on their right, but the officers reclaimed their ground, endeavoring to inspire their men by their own examples, and fighting bravely. I saw Little Starlight rush headlong at the man to whom he had directed my attention, and I could hear his shrill cheer come floating to me on the wind. He seemed to be but half the size of his antagonist, yet they met with the shock which seemed equal on both sides. The officer craved the bayonet of his puny foe, and struck out sharply with his sword; and I saw the blood spring up high from the negro's neck.

But the next instant they closed; the rushing bayonet gored the breast of the officer, and he rolled to the plain. Twice—thrice I saw the flashing bayonet leap into the air, and flash down again upon the prostrate man; and then, with a louder whoop than before, Starlight sprang on further into the fight; and the whole scene was shut from my view by the gathering smoke, for the breeze had died away.

The fight was soon over. The rebels were driven far back into the woods, their abatis captured and held, and we in possession of the field. My interest in what I had witnessed was so intense that I immediately hastened to the ground.

Our loss had been considerable, but that of the enemy was large. Their dead and wounded lay in all directions. I found the officer with whom I had seen Starlight engaged. He wore the ensignia of a rebel captain, and was stone dead, with his breast pierced many times by bayonet thrusts. As I was standing beside the body, Sergeant K— of Company C, came up to me with a troubled look.

"Little Starlight is dying, Sir," was his greeting, "and he wishes to see you very much."
"Starlight dying! Impossible!" I ejaculated, at the same time hurrying to the point indicated.

It was but too true. Little Starlight lay at the edge of the enemy's works, with a frightful gun-shot wound in the back part of his head, and as many as twenty brave fellows were clustering around him with sympathizing looks and tearful eyes. You may not believe me, but nevertheless I speak the truth when I say that the brave boy grinned joyously when he saw me.

"Yah! yah! Mass'r Chaplain," he cried, as I knelt by his side and took his hand; "dis nig's done for, he is. But did yer see me tackle dat ole coon, Cannel Billy? Yah! yah! I'se got it at last, mass'r!"
"Got what, my poor boy?" I whispered, with a trembling voice.

"FREEDOM!" cried Starlight, springing to his feet.
I saw that wild, strange gleam of passion leap into his rude features, and then he fell back into my arms.

"It am a lubly day, mass'r," he continued, speaking with great difficulty. "It am ebening now, an' de sun am settin', mass'r. But I hears de big drum ob de sky rollin' de rebblie ob de Lord. De day am breakin' for dis chile, mass'r, for I'se got it at last!"

His voice failed him here. He moved his lips; but in a moment they were stilled forever. He was dead.

I laid him down gently on the grass. The Major had also been standing by. "Come," said he, taking me by the arm—"come, let us go."
And as we went away I saw his moultache tremble perceptibly.

There were three regular members of Company C who died in that skirmish, but I think not one of them was wounded with a deeper, sincerer sorrow than was Little Starlight. One of the sergeants, who was a rude rhymer in his way, composed a brief epitaph for him. Others of the company performed what little offices they could; and the Colonel inquired particularly into the circumstances of his death. The Union claim were buried separately—they were so few. Starlight

also had a little grave of his own. He was free at last; and thus he came into the ownership of about five feet of that earth which had not been a very affectionate mother to him; and he was buried upon the rude head-board by the soldiers, and there he was buried grammatic about it, it may not be out of place to conclude our story with.

Here lies Little Starlight, who whose ill-fated spirit won its right to blessed Freedom through the foeman's deadly gun.
But he will, doubtless, somewhere Shine brightly after all.
As the Stars are in their glory When the shades of evening fall.

Several of the London theaters have been opened for religious worship on Sunday.

In Canada, butter is ten to twelve cents per pound, and flour \$3.65 to \$5.00 per barrel.

A woman in Chicago becoming enraged at her son while he was eating, struck him and he choked to death.

Mobile papers state that the Mobile and Ohio Railroad has been put in repair, and trains are running through to Meridian.

The cost of the tomb for the royalty of England, in process of erection at Frogmore, will be \$500,000.

Mr. Teal, a woolen merchant in Leeds, has failed. Liabilities £10,000,000. His assets are £5,000,000.

The fish oil of the eastern fisheries, which sold for \$9 a barrel a few years ago, now brings \$40.

In England the bible is now supplied for twelve cents, the New Testament for four cents, and the Gospels for two cents each.

The returns of the Pennsylvania soldiers, vote so far as they have been received, and counted show a majority for the Union ticket of 15,079 votes.

A French author says: "When I lost my wife, every family in the town offered me another; but when I lost my horse, no one offered to make him good."

A Yankee pig factory in New York turns out 35,000 or 40,000 every week. He occupies four buildings, and has ten horses and wagons engaged in delivering his pigs about the city.

In England employment is becoming more scarce in the manufacturing districts, and there is continued depression and selfishness in financial and commercial circles.

Leeds, Skipton, Silsden, Rockdale, Huddersfield, Manchester and other places in the north of England, felt the shock of an earthquake on September 29th.

It is difficult, if not impossible, for men to love and be wise, even the heathen gods when they were in love, made fools of themselves.

Rich men often disregard the greatest interest of the commonwealth, because absorbed in looking to the exorbitant interests of their own accumulation of wealth.

Forty-five years ago this autumn 1,000 bushels of potatoes were delivered at the State Prison in Concord at 10 cents a bushel. Now they are selling for \$1.20 cents a bushel.

A magnificent iron clad frigate called the Sebastopol, was launched at Cronstadt, Russia, on the 24th ult. She is 200 feet in length, has iron plates 4 inches thick, and draws 26 feet of water.

Intelligence from Rome announces the death of cardinal Bedini, who visited this country during the administration of Mr. Pierce. He died on the 6th of September, aged fifty-eight.

With a great picture of "The Railway Station" was sold a short time since, together with the subscription list for the engraving, for £18,000. These subscriptions list itself now amounts to over £25,000. The engraving of his "Derry day" is still selling.

An Indian skeleton of immense size was discovered three feet under ground, near Fall River, in Hadley, Massachusetts. The bones were so far decomposed that most of them crumbled upon being exposed to the air. Some of the Doctors think that the Indian was not less than seven feet high, and one hundred years old when he died.

SCARCITY OF CENTS.—The scarcity of cents continues to be the subject of general complaint, though they are being coined at the Philadelphia Mints at the rate of about \$100,000 worth per month, and are distributed as fast as coined. The scarcity is undoubtedly caused by people who hoard them for sale at the high premium paid for them.